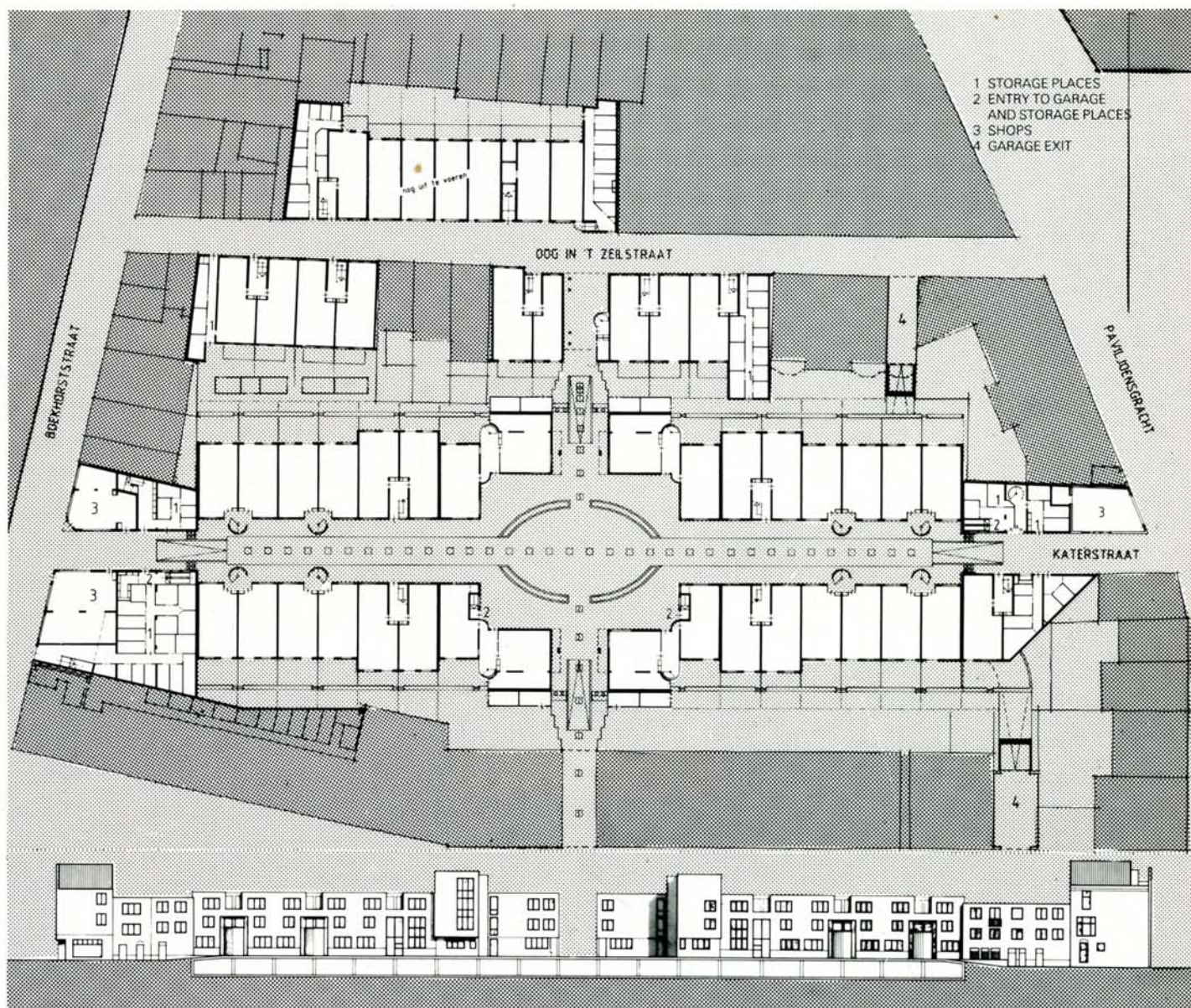


OVERSEAS HOUSING PROJECTS:

Different Angles

Featured here are projects in China, Switzerland, France and the Netherlands that reflect the state of urban housing and reconstruction in their cities. Some projects are realised with self help, and all with attention to their surroundings, sites and occupants' needs. In Australia, an H-shaped floor plan, designed to beat the heat outdoors, proves suitable for low cost mass housing.





SITE PLAN

Katerstraat, the Hague, the Netherlands

Urban renewal of twin streets

Architects Atelier PRO

The Katerstraat and Oog in't Zeilstraat areas in the heart of the Hague, the Netherlands, are completely transformed since an urban renewal project adopted the red light zones and infused them with a new architecture. Their resurrection was carefully planned and achieved by architects Atelier PRO – a group of 35 architects who believe in team work for better results. As demonstrated in the renewal project, Atelier PRO attempts to furnish the right answer to special problems by tapping the potential of the site and incorporating different architectural characteristics into an integrated whole.

Photographs by Bastian Ingen Houz BFN/Burafo

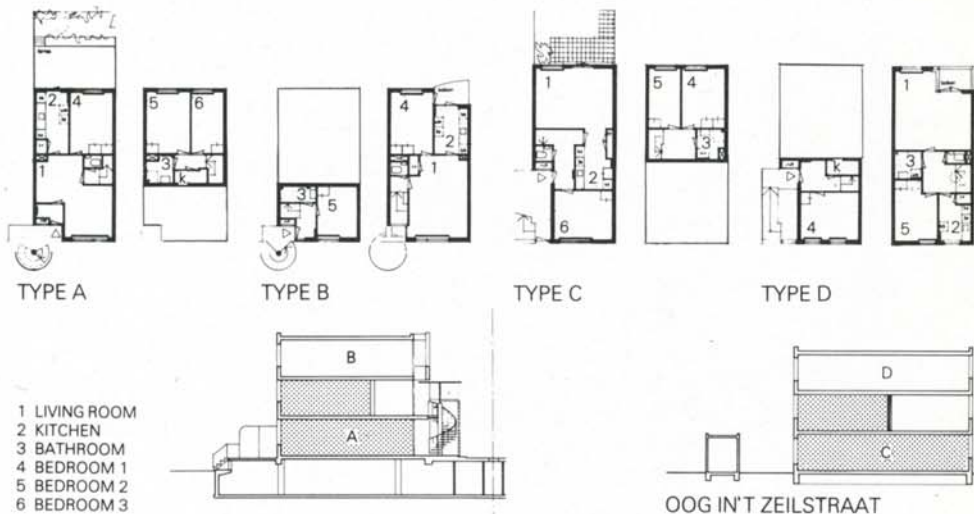


Rigid stucco facades give the construction an abstract character, emphasising, by contrast, the unique old monuments

Katerstraat and Oog in't Zeilstraat had gained a bad reputation over the years. Though intersecting the core of the Netherlands' capital, the streets had grown into red light districts. Thus, Alderman of City Development Adri Duivenstein was driven to launch a campaign for their "urban renewal as a cultural activity". The campaign finally culminated as *l'exemple par excellence* of new architecture incubated within an existing city structure.

Redesigning

Walking down the rehabilitated streets today, you are propelled into a new direction. There is an organic fusion of the new with the old. This was made possible with the upgrading plan divided into two parts. On the one hand, the twin streets are reconstructed; on the other, new sections have been constructed between them without

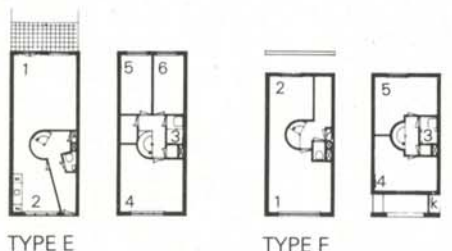


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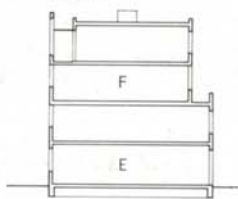
FRONT

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TYPE E

TYPE F



FRONT

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Entrance from Pavilgoens gracht
Left: A view of the central square from a glass-fronted stairwell

disturbing the familiar street pattern and upsetting the residents. Additionally, wherever possible at Katerstraat, a more spacious street profile was drawn out to introduce an intersection of crossroads and a square while incorporating more space.

Both streets and square are reserved for pedestrians. In fact, with two underground garage complexes taking care of the parking, slightly elevated Katerstraat is now a vehicle-free living zone. Its uncluttered sidewalks are further protected with most of the street's storage spaces relocated underneath

with the parking spaces. Along with overcrowding, the typical cellar sphere is avoided by the maximum use made of openness in detailing the garage edges and glass block pavings.

The adjacent buildings are allocated only three-four rooms to stabilise the population. The two-room dwellings are located above the shops where the project connects with existing structures. The central 'built in square' allows the four corners surrounding it to form, together, a central living space. Future occupants may now determine and direct the nature of their new inner city life, themselves.



Streetlights fixed on wires between the front walls of buildings, in keeping with tradition

Material composition

The colourful plastered facades of the asymmetrical dwellings contribute to the general atmosphere and architectural ambience at Katerstraat. A more unified image is achieved at Oog in't Zeilstraat by building between the existing structures so as to preserve much of the

original colour and flavour.

One now views a composite image formed in the heart of the Hague with much deliberation and foresight behind it. From cornerstone to cornerstone, the careful detailing and skillful facade finish have gone a long way in saving the streets from decay and their recent history.

Client: Algemeen Woningbouwvereniging Den Haag, The Hague.

Architect: Atelier PRO (Hans V Beek, Wolter Nuis).

Technical Management: Atelier PRO (Cees Nieuwenkamp).

Construction Engineers: Goudstikker de Vries, Zoetermeer.

Contractor: Intervam West, The Hague.

Period of Construction: 1984-1987. □